

## Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SAL-01

OFA-01 OES-05 DLOS-04 IO-11 ACDA-10 TRSE-00 SAJ-01

OMB-01 CG-00 DOTE-00 /103 W  
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P R 191200Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5974

INFO COMICEDEFOR

CINCLANT

CNO WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

UNCLAS REYKJAVIK 0098

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS PFOR IC UK

SUBJECT: ICELAND-UK FISHERIES DISPUTE: WEEKEND EDITORIAL  
ROUNDUP

1. FISHERIES DISPUTE DOMINATED WEEKEND PRESS, INCLUDING EDITORIALS,  
AS PAPERS ASSESSED PRIME MINISTER'S JANUARY 16 PRESS CONFERENCE  
AND GOI'S HANDLING OF SITUATION GENERALLY.

2. MORGUNBLADID (INDEPENDENCE PARTY), IN JANUARY 16 EDITORIAL,  
APPLAUDED STEPS TAKEN BY GOI THUS FAR WHICH, PAPER SAID, HAD  
PRODUCED SIGNIFICANT RESULTS. AS EXAMPLES, EDITORIAL CITED ABSENCE  
OF NEW RAMMING INCIDENTS, SUPPORT FOR ICELAND AT SPECIAL NAC  
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SESSION, AND OPE PROGRESS

FROM LUNS' MISSION. MORGUNBLADID

WENT ON TO NOTE THAT PRIMEMIN HALLGRIMSSON HAD, AT NEWS CONFERENCE, STRESSED ACCELERATED PACE OF CURRENT COD WAR COMPARED WITH EARLIER ONES AND CALLED ON ICELANDERS NOT TO BE IMPATIENT FOR RESULTS. MORGUNBLADID SECONDED THIS PLEA, SAYING THAT TIME IS ON ICELAND'S SIDE AND PREDICTING ULTIMATE VICTORY.

3. PROGRESSIVE PARTY'S TIMINN ALSO CLAIMED SUCCESS FOR GOVERNMENT MEASURES IN SATURDAY EDITORIAL. CITING SPECIAL NAC MEETING, LUNS VISIT, AND TOUR OF NATO CAPITALS BY MFA SEC GEN, TIMINN SAID GOI HAD AWAKENED GREAT INTEREST ABROAD IN ICELAND'S CAUSE. CRITICS MIGHT SAY THAT THESE STEPS WILL NOT DETERMINE OUTCOME, PAPER SAID, BUT NOTHING IS MORE ADVANTAGEOUS FOR ICELAND THAN AROUSING WORLD INTEREST IN COD WAR AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR ICELAND'S INDEPENDENCE.

4. IP-AFFILIATED VISIR WELCOMED REMOVAL BY PRIMEMIN OF UNCERTAINTY REGARDING BREAK IN RELATIONS WITH UK. IN JAN 17 EDITORIAL, VISIR SAID PM HAD WAITED TOO LONG BEFORE TAKING WHAT WAS RIGHT DECISION. HOWEVER, PAPER SAW POSSIBLE EXPLANATION IN FACT THAT GOI WAS FORCED TO COPE WITH EVENTS UNFOLDING MUCH MORE QUICKLY THAN IN PAST DISPUTES. PAPER WENT ON TO MAKE APPEAL FOR NATIONAL UNITY IN WHAT COULD BE LONG, HARD STRUGGLE, BUT EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN OUTCOME.

5. SELF-STYLED INDEPENDENT DAILY DAGBLADID SAID IN SATURDAY EDITORIAL THAT GOI'S LONG-DELAYED ANNOUNCEMENT ON DIPLOMATIC BREAK WAS WELCOME BUT THAT FURTHER WAIT FOR IMPLEMENTATION WAS UNWISE. FOREIGN REPORTERS WERE QUICK TO INTERPRET NEW DELAY AS VACILLATION, SAID DAGBLADID, AND THIS HURT ICELAND'S CAUSE. EDITORIAL WENT ON TO URGE GOI TO CAPITALIZE ON ICELAND'S STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE AND TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON BREAK IN RELATIONS BY INSURING THAT NATO ALLIES, "NOT LEAST AMERICANS," PUT PRESSURE ON BRITISH TO STOP AGGRESSION AGAINST ICELAND.

6. PEOPLES ALLIANCE DAILY THJODVILJINN CRITICIZED TWO ASPECTS OF PM'S STATEMENTS TO PRESS IN PAPER'S SATURDAY EDITORIAL. THJODVILJINN ATTACKED PM FOR HAVING EXPRESSED REGRETS OVER PROTESTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS BY ICELANDERS DIRECTED AGAINST NATO AND DEFENSE INSTALLATIONS. PAPER SAID PRIME MINISTER SOUNDED AS THOUGH THESE EVENTS MIGHT BE MORE SERIOUS THAN BRITISH RAMMINGS.

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EDITORIAL WENT ON TO CONDEMN PROPOSED WEEK'S DELAY IN BREAKING RELATIONS, SAYING THAT ONE OR TWO DAYS WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH. DURING DELAY, THJODVILJINN SAID, THERE WILL BE ATTEMPT TO NEGOTIATE CONCESSIONARY AGREEMENT, WHICH NATION MUST BE ON GUARD AGAINST.

7. JANUARY 18 MORGUNBLADID EDITORIAL SAID COD WAR OUTLOOK HAD RECENTLY CLARIFIED IN SOME RESPECTS. IT IS CLEAR, FOR EXAMPLE, FROM EVENTS AT SEA, THAT ICELAND CANNOT PHYSICALLY DENY BRITISH

THEIR CATCH--ALTHOUGH IT CAN MAKE THINGS DIFFICULT--AND THAT STRUGGLE MUST BE WON ON POLITICAL FRONT. THIS, AS PM SAID FRIDAY, DEMANDS PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE ON PARTY OF ICELANDERS. PAPER ALSO SAID IT IS NOW CLEAR, AFTER MUCH DEBATE, THAT NEITHER WITHDRAWAL FROM NATO NOR SEEKING ICELANDIC DEFENSE FORCE INTERVENTION WOULD BE IN ICELAND'S INTEREST. FINALLY, MORGUNBLADID SAID, EVEN THOUGH GOI HAS REITERATED ITS WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE IF UK WARSHIPS LEAVE, BRITISH MUST TAKE NOTE OF PRIMEMIN'S ASSERTION THAT ICELAND'S MANEUVERABILITY IN ANY TALKS IS VERY LIMITED.

8. SUNDAY THJODVILJINN AGAIN ATTACKED PRIME MINISTER FOR HIS CRITICISM OF RECENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND PROTESTS. PAPER CLAIMED THAT THERE HAD NEVER BEEN PRIME MINISTER AS UNPOPULAR AMONG HIS COUNTRYMEN AS GEIR HALLGRIMSSON IS TODAY AND SAID NINE OUT OF TEN ICELANDERS WISH HE WOULD RESIGN. THJODVILJINN ALSO DENOUNCED MORGUNBLADID FOR CONSISTENTLY DEFENDING AND PRAISING NATO IN SPITE OF AGRESSION BEING CARRIED OUT BY "NATO WARSHIPS."  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
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**Disposition Comment:**  
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